

- 6 -

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending objections and rejections for the reasons discussed below.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 5,410,598 issued to Shear, *et al.* (“Shear”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

A claim may be rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) if the claimed invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant. In this case, the Examiner cites the above-referenced U.S. patent (Shear) for showing all of the features of the claimed invention.

As further explained below, Applicants submit that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) rejection is improper because Shear does not disclose every element of the claimed invention. In this case, claim 1 recites, in pertinent part:

... generating a recommendation of at least one item of the selected item list, according to the previously provided ratings of the at least one item by the neighboring users.

Claim 8 recites, in pertinent part:

...generating a recommendation of at least one item from the selected item list based on ratings provided by each neighboring user.

The Examiner suggests that col. 3, line 60 through col. 4, line 15 of Shear’s specification discloses all the features of independent claims 1 and 8. This appears to be inaccurate because

- 7 -

neither the cited passage nor the remainder of Shear's specification and drawings bear any relation whatsoever to the elements recited in these claims. In particular, nothing in Shear discloses or suggests generating a recommendation of at least one item from the selected item list based on ratings provided by each neighboring user.

Instead, the passage cited by the Examiner discloses that Shear provides:

- (i) a database access system and method at a user site which permits authorized users to access and use the database and prevents unauthorized copying;
- (ii) a facility for measuring usage of the on-site database;
- (iii) a code/decode Interlock System which includes both software and a tamper proof hardware module that prevents unauthorized and/or unmetered use of a protected information base;
- (iv) and a multi-level coded security access system limiting access to various portions of a database only to those individuals possessing the proper security code(s).

Although Shear is directed to limiting access to a database to prevent unauthorized copying, Applicants submit that this is distinct from generating a recommendation of at least one item from a selected item list based on ratings provided by each neighboring user. Consequently, Shear's disclosure does not teach or suggest the claimed invention as recited in claims 1 and 8.

Additionally, Shear does not disclose "...computing a plurality of similarity factors based on items from the selected list that indicate similarity between the advisee and a plurality of users of the recommendation system who have previously provided ratings of items from the selected items list," as recited by claim 1. Additionally, Shear does not disclose "...selecting neighboring

- 8 -

users from the first set of users based on similarities between the advisee and each member of the first set of users...”, as recited by claim 8. Such features are contrary and unrelated to Shear’s disclosure of a tamper-proof decrypting device and associated controller that decrypts selected portions of a stored database and measures the quantity of information which is decrypted. Consequently, these features are not anticipated by Shear.

Because claims 1 and 8 each recite at least one element not taught or disclosed by Shear, the 102(a) rejection of claims 1 and 8 is improper and should be withdrawn. Accordingly, claims 1 and 8 are distinguishable over Shear and are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-6 are allowable based on their dependencies from allowable claim 1. Claims 9-14 are also allowable based on their dependencies from allowable claim 8. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass claims 1-6 and 9-14 to issue.

Claim 7 recites, in pertinent part:

.... a plurality of records, each record including a user identifier, an item identifier, and a rating value,

wherein each record is linked in a first and a second dimension, the first dimension linking records with a same user identifier in a sequence according to the item identifier,

The Examiner again suggests col. 3, line 60 – col. 4, line 15 discloses the features recited in claim 7. But, as explained above, this passage merely describes that Shear’s invention is directed to securing, protecting, and monitoring the usage of a database. Nothing in Shear even remotely discloses or suggests linking one or more of a plurality of records in one or more dimensions, as recited by claim 7. In fact, the remainder of Shear discloses encrypting and decrypting portions of a database. Such activities are not related to the claimed invention because the user identifier, item identifier, and the rating value associated with each of the plurality of records, are

- 9 -

associated with each record, not to protect the records from unauthorized copying as taught by Shear, but to identify ratings by user, to determine neighboring users, and to provide a recommendation based on the previously provided ratings of the neighboring users.

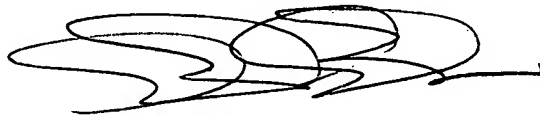
Additionally, one or more of the plurality of records may be linked by the same user identifier and arranged in sequence according to the item identifier. This simply is not taught or disclosed by Shear's description of a database security system. For these reasons, claim 7 is distinguishable over the cited reference. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 102(a) rejection of claim 7 is requested.

- 10 -

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed. Applicants hereby make a written conditional petition for extension of time, if required. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to **IBM Deposit Account No. 09-0457** (Endicott).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew M. Calderon', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

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